



DISCARD

WHITE APRIL

BOOKS BY LIZETTE WOODWORTH REESE:

A Branch of May

A Handful of Lavender

Little Henrietta

A Quiet Road

Selected Poems

Spicewood

Wayside Lute

Wild Cherry

A Victorian Village

WHITE APRIL AND OTHER POEMS

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TO MY SISTER
MARGARETTA JOSEPHINE

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WHITE APRIL

WHITE APRIL

The orchard is a pool, wherein I drown;
It is a very pool of loveliness.
I clutch the edge of a white world and press
To bottomless white billows down and down:
I clutch, I gasp, and all at once each spring
That I have known comes sharply to my mind,
Passes before me, and each one I find,
Stirs in me a packed, swift remembering.
Oh, pear-trees, ancient by an ancient lane,
A hundred at the delicate white start,
Tall waves that roll and break upon a shore!
I struggle up, I am myself again:
Dripping with April, April to the heart,
I run back to the house, and bolt the door!

OWNERSHIP

Love not a loveliness too much,
For it may turn and clutch you so,
That you be less than any serf,
And at its bidding go.

Be master; otherwise you grow
Too small, too humble, like to one
Long dispossessed, who stares through tears
At his lost house across the sun.

Wild carrot in an old field here,
A steeple choked with music there,
Possess, as part of what is yours;
Thus prove yourself the heir.

Your barony is sky and land,
From morning's start to the night's close;
Bend to your need Orion's hounds,
Or the thin fagot of a rose.

SHEPHERDING

Who is more tender than a shepherd is,
The intimacy of weathers in his face?
A serviceable staff, a fold are his:
Out in the park or some like country place,
Have I not seen one, in a golden air,
On golden road, driving his flock before,
A figure tall, hereditary, spare,
And longed to follow to that kindly door?
It must be that some young, forgotten thing,
Chokes at the heart at sight of these that pass;
Lost dreams gather about us in the grass;
And when this happens, for a moment we fling
Our gold down, as it were but hoarded glass,
And run back to our ancient shepherding.

COMFORT

If worst, not best, were yours, if this were so—
Your dreams gone dry, and you, without the wit
To dream new others, were but left to sit
And gnaw at bitternesses—would you know
This would not trouble a planet? Or the gold
That curves the crocus flower into a thing
To hurl itself upon you in the spring,
And leave you shaken in the April mould?
Grief may be swift; swifter is loveliness;
Grief will be overtaken and held fast;
For loveliness is of itself the proof
Of its own certainty, not a whit less;
You stumble from your tears, to reach at last,
A door, and an imperishable roof.

BOUND.

Could I shake you out of my heart,
As water out of a cup,
A little silver on the grass,
The sun would soon dry up . . .

Would I be poorer for this thing,
Though wiser, too? I know
By all our days of ill and good,
I dare not let you go.

You are to me, I am to you,
Common, and bound, and plain,
As is a window to a house,
As yarrow to a lane.

Too close to see each other else
Than earth-thick to the core;
So near there is nought left for us
But to love and love the more.

WOMEN

Some women herd such little things—a box
Oval and glossy, in its gilt and red;
Or square of satin, or a high, dark bed,
But when love comes, they drive to it all their flocks,
Yield up their crooks, take little, gain for fold
And pasture, each a small, forgotten grave.
When they are gone, then lesser women crave
And squander their sad hoards, their shepherd's gold.
Some gather life like fagots in a wood,
And crouch its blaze, without a thought at all
Past warming their pinched selves, to the last spark.
And women, as a whole, are swift and good;
In humor scarce, their measure being small;
They plunge; they leap, yet somehow miss the dark.

YOUR FIRST LOVE

When the wild pear spills over,
When the wild pear breaks down
Its crocks full of silver,
A mile out of town,

Her foot set in music,
Her frock made of blue,
She fleets the young country
With looks all for you.

With a hundred poor things
Long, long is she done;
With a roof, or a field,
Or the golden round sun.

No heaven can hold her,
No grave keep her down,
When the wild pear is blowing
A mile out of town.

DEARTH

There are a thousand words that we might say,
But being drab of wit, we say but one;
We halt, the world in hand, upon the way,
To spend a farthing, not a field, a sun.
We batter at shut doors. Oh, drab of wit!
Can a spent house dole out our worth of bread,
Or can we wrench a lodging out of it,
Or proper share of purples from a shed?
We were not meant for pinched things, to be poor,
But still we scrape life bare of large or deep,
As housewives scrape their crocks. Thus stay we
small;
Thus scarcity for scarcity is sure.
Oh, we must loose ourselves from what we keep,
Begin with splendors then, or not at all!

CROWS

Earth is raw with this one note,
This battered making of a song
Narrowed down to a crow's throat,
Above the willow-trees that throng

The crooking field from end to end.
Fixed as the sun, the grass, that sound;
Of what the weather has to spend,
As much a part as sky, or ground.

The primal yellow of that flower,
That tansy making August plain,
And the stored wildness of this hour,
It sucks up like a bitter rain.

Miss it we would, were it not here;
Simple as water, rough as spring,
It hurls us, at the point of spear,
Back to some naked, early thing.

Listen now. As with a hoof
It stamps an image on the gust:
Chimney by chimney, an old roof
Starts for a moment from its dust.

COWSLIPS

Oh, in the April weather,
Oh, in an April hour,
Go down the length of an Essex lane,
And pluck the cowslip flower!

By Romford, or by Tilbury,
Perhaps near Manningtree,
Or if you foot it farther south,
By little Brightlingsea.

I know a place where cowslips grow,
Beyond a vicar's wall,
In straggling clumps along the grass,
So golden and so tall.

Often a wind blows by that way;
With a wild, salty shout,
Shakes the road from end to end,
And hacks their candles out.

The cowslips in the vicar's lane,
A moment flatten down;
At once are up and lit again,
And running into town.

SUDDEN WEALTH

A smaller loveliness serves me;—
Mist in the hedge, one marigold
Bitter as dearth, hot from the mould;
A few sheep under a white tree.

Too much this lit, and dwindling sky;
Silver, dispersed, the last hour's rain;
And flashing windows up the lane;
And little musics in a cry.

Like one, long poor, but who has found
A sudden rich hoard stacked down his way,
Bent double, shoulders it, I may
Go sprawling headlong on the ground.

Let me reach to this height; a thing
Outlasting littleness, let me pass,
Wealthy, and hurt, struck to the grass—
Life, death, left for remembering!

FROST

Frost is the fire
That burns up the rose;
Stem, petal and leaf,
At the last it goes.

Then the king's strange house
Turns grayly chill,
And the silver cups wait
On shelf and on sill.

And in the old yards
Naught is there sweet
To pluck for the girl
In her winding-sheet.

This is a thing
Falls sharper than blows;
To run through the world,
And find not a rose.

GREED

Gulp your fat farms down like wine;
Sack your swift and evil hoard,
As Judas did with the silver
They paid him for his Lord.

Wrench from poor and from foolish,
As much as you can hold;
In your intolerable house,
Turn bitter, grow old.

Wait. What of the secret thought
Will break your body in two?
What of the untenanted lawns
That suckled you?

But one thing then will matter,
Oh, bitter and grown old!
The crocus that sets by the lost door,
Its jug of pointed gold.

THE FAR THINGS

A loaf may be enough
To keep you from the clod;
You need a ghostlier stuff
To company with God.

Two crops grow in a field,
Beneath the ripening sun;
And of the flesh one yield,
And of the spirit one.

The far things get between,
When you stoop down to reap;
Their harvest falls unseen
Under the sickle's sweep.

You stack it long and sweet,
Unknowing, with pant of breath;
And you, if this you eat,
Shall never taste of death.

THRIFT

A star proves never traitor, and a weed—
Even that vetch obscurely purple there—
Can hoard such loyalties against your need,
You may go rich, though all the world go bare.
A blackbird's whistle over the young grass,
Is but another wealth; so are these, too:—
The old rememberings that start and pass
At its short music, when the year is new.
If stars you love, and all their like, then know
Your love will be a thrift to set you clear
Of beggary, and whining at a door.
You change, life changes; it is ever so;
But these last on from whirling year to year:
Learn God of them, and add Him to your store.

LONDON FOG

It was so very strange a thing
To hear Paul's sending down
From his lost tower, nine choking sounds,
To the lost town.

The men went by in silver coats,
Here one, another there,
To break in pieces on the blur
Of the vast air.

Years, years. Then in the dripping road,
A quick and yellow pane;
Then, strutting up and down Paul's steps,
His doves again.

WALLS

Neither there nor here,
Neither deep nor high,
Makes a stretch of wall;
It may be as nigh

As the flame to a star,
As the flower to a hand:
Out of a hundred words,
One you understand.

It need not measure deep
As a door in town:
Never find you out
Where your dream went down.

No higher than a shelf,
Nor as a fence so tall!
From the grave behind
Comes no sound at all.

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No higher than a shelf!—
You can not go where,
Your old beloveds walk
In the great, delicate air.

GOLD

Rub the sleep from out your eyes,
Judith. Run down to the cold;
Cowslips there unpack their gold;
In the wet new grass it lies

Slender, mutable, and gay,
In a flurry of the rain;
Run before it is in vain;
Gold grows scarcer every day.

Doubtless there is still enough
To last on from year to year,
Wildly permanent and clear;
Cowslips are not of that stuff.

Rosalind had this gathering, too!
Run into the house and fill
Shelf, and corner of the sill:
It will last as long as you.

Rosalind went. And cowslips must.
Girls and cowslips cannot stay
Longer than the required day;
For the end of gold is dust.

BRAMBLES

Have you seen silver laid on white,
By a county wall?
Or early stars low in the grass,
And hardly lit at all?

Of every loveliness I know,
Pressed out of any hour,
Give me a farthing's worth of wind,
And a pale bramble flower.

And if a candle I do need—
Being so dull a clod—
I shall pluck one from the thorns.
To light me up to God.

A candle made of silver and white,
Silver, and white, and small,
Almost like music going out,
And not a flame at all.

Many a saint will crowd around,
To see, in that fair land,
The blowing of a bramble flower,
And take it from my hand.

PLOWING

Honors take mould, and fames go dry,
And songs crack after a few years:
Is it not better then to die,
And choke with dust, and not with tears?

Men drag the plow out of the shed;—
Some lonely field waits for its due;
And thus a sure rich crop is sped;
They know, because their fathers knew.

But plowing is far more than this:
To take from tired mouth again
The winter's taste, you must not miss
That wistful wisdom at the pane.

Cast to the plow your honors, fames,
For some take mould, and some go dry;
Stripped of legalities and shames,
They may return, as golden, high

As spicewood by the pool out there;
If not, make others; it would seem
A proper task in spring to bear
A better splendor, a newer dream.

Honors, fames, songs, or none at all!
Yet shall you know—if these do pass—
A tree perpetual, and a wall,
And gleam of water in the grass.

SCARCITY

Scarcity saves the world,
And by that is it fed:
Then give it hunger, God,
Not bread.

Scarce things are comely things;
In little there is power;
November measures best
Each vanishing flower.

If you dig a well,
If you sing a song,
By what you do without,
You make it strong.

And life as well as art,
By scarceness grows,
Not surfeit. Theirs must be
The hunger of the rose.

A WINDY NIGHT

Should Ellen from the rectory come,
Or from the grey farms Nan or Mark,
Then will they find my house gone dumb,
Drained to the ribs of all but dark.

Ellen, white mullein on its stalk,
Knows her parish, shop and stall;
Smelling of apples, Nan will talk
Of weathers, crops; Mark not at all.

Not I that shape there in the night,
Slumped down within the knobbed green
chair,
That thing left in the fagot-light,
To mumble welcome, stare and stare.

For here, the bellowing lanes are out;
Roofs crack; each window is a cry;
Afar, afar, with dimming shout,
Orion's hounds race down the sky.

Beyond the pools of ghosts they race;
The Dead troop out as they go by,
And point them down the whirling space;
Orion hunts and with him I!

PROFIT

No profit has a flower
Except to grow;
Yet it pays for itself,
Its hour in blow,
By being a flower, a thing
To fasten us to spring.

Each loveliness we earn
By loveliness;
Worth comes to worth, and so
No more, no less,
Our profit is to be each day
Ourselves; by this we pay.

FOG

I had a house; I had a yard
Crammed with marigolds, so high,
So deep in fire, that it was hard
Not to believe, if I went by,

I would be blistered to the bone.
All gone. A square of dripping grass
Each side, and underfoot wet stone,
That sound like click of glass on glass.

This spare, hidden beauty all around,
Is not too little, or too much;
A surfeit had I; now am bound
To a ghost's wealth, too frail for touch.

To a ghost's weather, that or this
Of its old secrecy left untold;
Relinquished, let alone, I miss
House, nor yard, nor a tall marigold.

I NEVER TALK OF HUNGER

I never talk of hunger. No.
I, once down to the last crust,
Would rather rip each bone from bone,
And cast me to the dust.

Never of battles. Have not I
Held the hot sword in hand?
Broken my body for a cause,
In a lost field, lost land?

There is no word in any tongue,
Can make clear to one or all,
My strange hunger, or that fight
My back against a wall.

HAWS

The haw is on the thorn-tree,
And though a thing so small,
Sets a temporal scarlet
At a county wall.

With globed and glossy laughter,
It shakes the grizzled land;
On the edge of disaster,
Holds up a staying hand.

A penny's worth of splendor,
At ending of the year:
Out with the trumpet;
Up with the cheer!

THE GARDENER

When I grow tulips in the spring,
Sea-white by the wall,
I feel I know not anything,
Not anything at all.

But can there be a gardener
Less ignorant than I,
Of this vast secret of the dust,
This splendor going by?

The four and twenty elders, too,
Have not been told at all,
Or Mark, or Luke, or Barnabas,
Of a tulip by a wall.

Now there is nothing left to do—
The matter is quite plain—
But keep on planting bulbs; I know
That they will flower again.

But keep on planting bulbs. I know,
Although I am a clod,
That tulips still are tulips. Yes.
And that God still is God.

SENNET

Oh, we came down to Sennet,
And a mist was on the land,
As silver as the Holy Cup
The priest takes in his hand!

A phantom horse went up the street,
With phantom cloak dropped out behind,
Of one who rode him, bowed of head,
And long gone out of mind.

And of a sudden, a diminished gold,
Beside the pale door of a shed,
A clump of the last zinnias lit
A candle for the dead.

And once, immeasurably high,
Struck the pinched music of the clocks,
Muffled in cords of silk. We felt
Shut in a silver box,

A box as frail as a dream's dream,
Yet was it iron-hard in power;
Easy to shove through, as to make
A pebble into flower.

Wrenched from ourselves were we a space,
With nought of love or gold to spend:
Oh, thus we came to Sennet,
And down to the Land's End!

SURETY

How do I know that you will come again?
I judge you by imperishable things
Like crab-trees rosy as the cloaks of kings,
That twice a year blow down the same tall lane.
I dare the silence in the house, each place
Without you, as a stalk of leaf, or song
Beaten to its last emptiness; the wrong
The neighbors do you as they talk apace.
Nothing can tear the spring from out the year,
Or love from out the heart. Both hands have I
Filled with crab bloom November as in May.
Is blossom to bough than you to me more dear?
Has the old trick of flowering been put by?
You will come back, you will come back and stay.

ONE MOOD

I can never think it right
That you left me. Stay I must:
I must stay and break that bread,
Bitter as the dust.

But since it all is done, and I,
Once sure of you as of a door,
Must eat that bread to the last crust—
Nothing can astonish more.

As fixed a thing you were to me,
As the lines drawn on a chart:
How could I know that you were not?
That you would break my heart?

WORDS

Gutter and wain
Stubble and dung;
The sea and the cloud;
The tower, the lane;—
Here is a race;
Here is its tongue.

Lord Mayors in scarlet,
Old women with bees,
Shepherds at lambing time
Made these.

Here is the music,
In which a man knows,
He may babble of Homer
Or a rose.

A SCENT

There will come a thing to you,
And come to you it must,
That will cast you down,
As low as the dust.

An odor will go by
Of satiny pears that drop,
Behind a cracked, high wall,
To be sold in a shop.

Or of the wild mint flower,
Sharp honey and to spare,
Or the billow of gay skirts,
Up a lost stair.

It will cast you down, down,
As low as the dust:
There will come to you this thing,
And come to you it must.

PLANTING BULBS

Why do folk plant dull bulbs beneath the wall?
To get them scarlets on a day in spring.
So in like fashion do I plant the thing
I love, and yearn to harvest most of all.
Now, if I plant a tulip, from the mould
Will I not reap a tulip, that will blow
And candle a week's length? Were this not so,
The surety of the weathers would not hold.
But what of dreams more tender than the black
Of any bulb great with its flower to be?
Of the clear matter of the heart's right due?
Dim mirths and musics for a time of lack?
All these I planted. Up I look, and see
You come into my field. I harvest you.

NINA

She was a woman like a candle-flame—
This stranger dead a score of years ago—
Tall, clearly dark. We loved, but said not so,
The slowness and the music of her name.
A widow. She was kind, the women knew,
And lent them patterns of her violet frocks;
And she had lovers. Past her high, crabbed box,
Went the sour judge, the rosy doctor, too.
Once, twice, a black word pricked the country-side.
She heard, and held a flower up to her lips,
Spoke brightly of our town, its small, close life:
On a wild morning of a sudden she died.
The next, a loud man, with the air of ships,
Stood at her coffin head: she was his wife.

PAIN

Here I break loose from Beauty. Here
Drag my beaten body up,
Brimming bitterness like a cup,
To front the stare of the strange year.

I see men like to trees that walk
Blurred roads. Before the long, last mile,
I creep into my house awhile:
Bitter with emptiness, a stalk

Dried to the root, pressed to the wall,
It might be best to cast me down
On some fire lit in the town,
And get me done with, once for all.

But who are these on every hand,
Become my daughters and my sons?
The weary and the troubled ones;
I, being hurt, can understand.

Pain is the ancient whip of God;
It cut me to the idle heart
Again, again, and by that smart
I rank next Him, and not a clod.

Have I taken leave of Beauty then?
The depth of wood, the height of tower,
Are in the blue of wayside flower;
What depths, what heights in sons of men?

What is an hour, what is a year?
I measure time by splendors, not
By stale, mechanical rule or lot;
And life by flame, and not by fear.

What is a depth, what is a height?
And what a year, and what an hour?
A soul's work, and the blue of flower;
Glory to glory, light to light!

SUCCORY

Here at its last, has August made
That narrow field anew,
With multitudinous tall flowers
Of succory. Flames of blue

In silver ancient candlesticks
In a stilled, half-wrecked land,
With not a wind to snuff them out,
Or a hard, querulous hand.

I tremble at such loveliness
That gives me as my part,
Out of its growing scarcity,
This shaking of the heart.

This wistful, hard-wrung opulence,
That cracks my wits in two,
Makes all else nought, except to know
A succory flower is blue.

CORNWALL

Fowey, Sennet, Pengrise, Ives—

Salty of sound . . .

Newquay, and Trelithick,

Penzance, Germound.

Toppling down into the sea,

Or tight on the fells,

Gritting hard upon the wind,

And the heather smells.

There I know an old house,

Where the rooks stay,

In the moody long trees,

Day after day.

How they call across the town,

In the early spring!

How they cry at fall of leaf,

Each forgotten thing!

REVELATION

Trembling I drink this cup,
To the last drop. I am a thing
Of strange and humble eyes, that see
A sudden, young world flowering.

Trembling, I drink, and see
Great roofs, a different lane;
The difference of loveliness,
All in a moment plain.

The unescapable rose,
The furlongs of the sky,
Are grown to such a height,
That I, too, must grow high.

High must I grow indeed,
Prove myself worth and more
This awful sky, the rose,
These doubled acres at my door.

LOVER TO LOVER

Were I to love you less,
You would be a star,
An apricot bloom plucked on a hill,
And set within a jar.

But I do love you so,
You are the sky itself;
The whole white loneliness of spring,
Not one flower on a shelf.

THE SECOND WIFE

She knows, being woman, that for him she holds
The space kept for the second blossoming,
Unmixed with dreams, held tightly in the folds
Of the accepted and long-proper thing—
She, duly loved; and he, proud of her looks
Shy of her wit. And of that other she knows
She had a slim throat, a nice taste in books,
And grew petunias in squat garden rows.
Thus knowing all, she feels both safe and strange;
Safe in his life, of which she has a share;
Safe in her undisturbed, cool, equal place,
In the sweet commonness that will not change;
And strange, when, at the door, in the spring air,
She hears him sigh, old Aprils in his face.

THINGS

Who can weigh a thing?
Or measure it up and down?
A clod may wreck a pane,
A rose a town.

The sight of an old field,
Or a bramble bush in blow;—
In a moment are you wise;
Of a sudden you know.

Gone are the marketings,
The uneasy less or more,
The idle fight, the hour you lost
At a barred door.

Out in the highway there—
The dust thick as meal—
Job at your elbow,
Cæsar at your heel!

HEAT

Townward a damson tree,
A wild thing, and alone,
In the month-old dust. It is as still
As if it were of stone.

A little at a time,
As out of a split sack,
It lets some of its dead leaves go,
Of muffled gilt and black.

Along the falling fence,
In some crack thereabout,
Dropping like soot the mulleins show,
All their white fire snuffed out.

Nought is there left to lose,
Nothing is there to spend;
Wild bough, and wall, and shriveled flower
Are come to the end's end.

BELLS

More music has a London bell,
Than aught else up or down;
God rest the souls of them that wrought
The bells of London town.

Once, from grizzled Clement Danes,
Such a sound went up,
It was the heart-ache of the world,
Held in a single cup.

When it was ended—I do swear
On books piled to the sky—
Cherubim and seraphim
In the hush went by.

THE HEIRS

When I come into the house,
That my fathers gave,
No nearer than the door I get;—
Quick-foot from the grave,

Like the wind blown through a shower,
The lovely, greedy Dead:
Not a look they give to me;
Not a word is said.

Theirs is every nook and hole,
From rafter down to bin;
Nothing have I but the frock
That I stand up in.

APPLES DROPPING

A close, thick, unescapable sound,
That splits against the ground:
The road is full of it; and folk
Half turn around to see who spoke.

The old house hears it all day long,
Not one sound, but a throng,
Home-coming footsteps heard before,
Fumbling a moment at the door.

A sprawled black stand the apple-trees,
Up to their battered knees
In the blurred light, in the strange grass,
As though long painted on a glass.

Yellow as broom six windows gleam
On the edge of a dream;
And in the blur of light about,
That rich one sound goes in and out.

DREAMS

Facts are like these:
A dove has wings;
And there are books and wharves,
And there are kings.

By them we barter spires,
Or a gilt cup;
Or patch a road,
Or pluck a flower up.

Dreams are not so;
My two is four;
And what I save is piled
High as a door.

Naked, I go in silks;
Though bare my hand,
I have a field,
A house in every land.

Let a world rot,
A rose tumble down;
The dream of it will run
From town to town.

AFAR

I would have brought you with a kiss
To something nearer than a star,
Or than a cloud, a tower are;
But what was close you thought amiss.

You were so far, and yet so dear,
I would have brought you with a kiss
To that old homeliness or this:
You thought amiss what was so near,

And thrust the lovely matter by,
And lost. Beyond my silenced speech,
I hear your laughter barely reach
A smaller earth, a lesser sky.

THE WIDOW

Like the dark bulbs deep in her garden dust,
That burst with their one weather, which is spring,
So all her memories burst with that one thing—
The thought of him, her April, as they must.
Once saw she, with that hard sight women know,
Her battered dreams come stare her, saw, and knew
The scarcity he gave, yet as his due
Took her stored wealth and for her high, his low.
Against his intricate loud moods she set
Her practiced silences. His whistle had
An elfin sound; his eyes a field-brown were.
And these the twain that she can not forget;
Or that he was her small, wild, blundering lad,
And that, when he was hurt, he ran to her.

DEVON

Never come to Devon
Until you come to die;
It is of such a loveliness,
Road, and moor, and sky,

Your body and your soul
Will fumble and ache;
It will break the heart in you,
Before a heart should break.

Long roads streaming through the wind,
Apples dropping down;
Moors like music; near at hand
An old salty town.

Turn your back upon it all;
Let not your foot draw nigh;
Never come to Devon,
Until you come to die.

NOVEMBER

Must I gnaw at a harvest such as this,
Out of the sprawled and grizzling weather
 wrung?

I, used so long to opulences, miss
The taste of them upon a pampered tongue.
I dare not starve. There is a thing or two
I still must compass. Can I from this bin,
Snatch sustenance to last a brief day through,
Enough-no more-to keep my poor bones in?
Here is no scarceness; here is but a hush,
Between one plenty and another a space.
Take of these immortalities about,
This surety of life for grass and bush;
Full cup, full platter here. Stand in this place,
And hear the graves crack, and the dead rush
 out.

WIND

Now has the wind a sound
Made out of rain;
A misty, broken secretness,
That drenches road and pane.
It drips and drips; a hush
Falls on the town;
Like golden clods an old tree shakes
Its apples down.

FOR ANICE

Laughter, soft speech, round, salty tears,
Emperors' houses, sails at sea,
Each holds you, and your spent young years,
As hives the honey of the bee.

Even the shops in blurred old towns
Bring you from intolerable space,
Double your rareness with their gowns
Like those you wore in a lost place.

Fog-blue one, another the gold
Of half-blown wall-flowers in the spring;
Never a girl was a thing so cold;
Never so misty, flaming a thing.

The elder-bush in broad, green lot,
So white, so frail, and smelling there
Like spice set boiling in a pot,
Petals you in the village air.

Delicately about I go,
Since you have made the dust your bed:
When I am asked of large or low,
What can I say but that you are dead?

THE WHITE FURY OF THE SPRING

Oh, now, now the white fury of the spring
Whirls at each door, and on each flowering plot—
The pear, the cherry, the grave apricot!
The lane's held in a storm, and is a thing
To take into a grave, a lantern-light
To fasten there, by which to stumble out,
And race in the new grass, and hear about
The crash of bough with bough, of white with
white.

Were I to run, I could not run so fast,
But that the spring would overtake me still;
Halfway I go to meet it on the stair.
For certainly it will rush in at last,
And in my own house seize me at its will,
And drag me out to the white fury there.

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